

# ANCIENT SKIES

*"Come Search With Us!"*

## Official Logbook of the Ancient Astronaut Society

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### ANCIENT THRACIAN MONUMENTS

BY VESSELYN BOYANOV and YAROSLAV DIMITROV\*

As investigators searching for proof of an interference of an alien mind in the development of humanity on Earth, we participated in a little expedition to the interesting Bulgarian Archaeological Reservation named Sboryanovo. The Reservation is situated about 120 km west of the town of Dobritch and about 7 km north-west of the small town of Ispirih. Bulgaria is one of the Balkan Countries of south-eastern Europe, located between Romania on the north and Greece on the south.

The Reservation occupies an area of about 160 sq km and includes about 100 Thracian mound tombs, of which only 7 or 8 have been examined so far. There are various interesting monuments in the Sboryanovo Reservation and the oldest are neolithic, according to the archaeologists, although probably much older.

There are other places in Bulgaria where similar monuments are concentrated, and according to the researchers, all of these archaeological objects situated throughout the Balkan Mountains have a relation between each other. Moreover, one courageous theory holds that our ancestors, ancient Thracians and Bulgarians, came from the lands of ancient Egypt and Ethiopia.

Researchers have found that the disposition of the mound tombs resembles different constellations and separate stars. A part of the tombs of Sboryanovo resembles the series of the stars beginning with Polux and Castor of Gemini and ending with Rigel of Orion. The ring of Orion in the sky points to Aldebaran, the brightest star of Taurus, while the three mounds point to the old sanctuary of Heros, located in the Temple of Demyr Baba (Iron Father). But we have to note that some of the stars with the same brightness have been eliminated. A map of the mounds and constellations published by the Bulgarian magazine Otechestvo shows the striking similarity of the layout of the two.

The tomb called Ginina Mogila (Gina's Mound) has been recognized by UNESCO as an archaeological object of world importance. The tomb is situated in the south-eastern sector of the mound and consists of a dromos and three chambers in a square plan - antechamber, side chamber and central burial chamber - roofed with a semicylindrical vault. Its walls are built of well-hewn limestone quadrae, while the floor is paved with large stone tiles. The design of the central burial chamber is very original. Its interior has a Doric order of four

Doric and one Corinthian semi-columns, an architrave and frieze of triglyphs and metopes. A sculptured decoration of ten female figures, caryatids, and the painted scene in the lunette on the north-western wall, situated opposite the entrance, are skillfully placed within this architectural frame.

The caryatids, worked in high relief, are placed on the north-eastern wall. They are 1.20 m high and are depicted frontally, in a ceremonial attitude and garb, with raised arms as if carrying the architrave and the vault. Their poses and garments, ornamented with plant motifs of the Svestari caryatids link them with the religious and artistic conceptions of the epoch. They present one of the aspects of the Great Goddess, depicted as the goddess of vegetation and fertility, mistress of life in this world and the next. The caryatids of Svestari shed a new light on the religion and funeral cult of the Thracians, contributing to the elucidation of the symbolical character of the female image in Thracian art and religion.

Engineer Peter Vulev, one of the investigators, has found the measuring unit of the tomb - 0.2676m. The so-called Sacred Egyptian Triangle (3:4:5) has been used in the plan of the mound; that is, the creator of the mound has made dimensions using combinations of these three numbers. The axis of the building has been directed to that point of the eastern horizon where the Sun rises on the Winter Solstice, December 22. In addition, a relation between ancient Thracians and Egyptian pyramid builders could be seen in the Thracian cult building. For example, the famous Bulgarian artist, Carandash, while investigating the proportion of the Cheops Pyramid discovered the so-called Second Golden Cross-section. Its elements can be found in both the Ginina Mogila tomb and the Pantheon in Rome, a temple dedicated to all the gods. Therefore, we can conclude that the Thracian ancestors who lived more than 20 centuries ago possessed in some degree a part of the supreme knowledge which has been generally known by the ancients.

Another interesting monument at Sboryanovo is the temple named Demyr Baba (The Iron Father). This temple could be dated back to the early Muslim culture and consists of two parts - a front part with a cone-shaped roof and a pentagon-shaped back part with a dome-shaped roof. There is a quotation from the Koran written over the entrance: "Ali is the best rider". The temple is built of well-hewn stone blocks held together without mortar. There are Arabic texts carved on some of the blocks. In the inside there are some color wall paintings now being restored. Ventilation ducts can also be seen. The building is surrounded by a wall built also of well-shaped stone blocks held together without mortar. Numerous Jewish symbols can be seen on the walls, the most significant of which is the six-pointed star.

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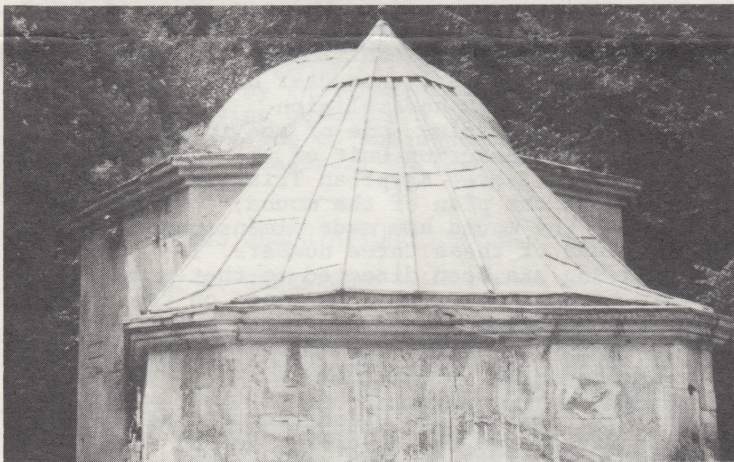
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Another interesting feature is that one block has two round holes cut into the stone, with diameters of 5 cm and 3 cm respectively and 3 cm in depth. The holes are surrounded by several strange designs carved into the stone in bas-relief. There is a legend that putting both hands over the holes could give the person a vital energy charge for a long time.

One of the most interesting things in the entire complex is the existence of three large stone megaliths, the treatment of which is dated to about the 20th Century B.C. One of them is bed-shaped, which supposedly can heal abdominal pains of a person lying on it. There is also a spring whose water supposedly has healing qualities. The conclusion is that the zone was built by the ancient Thracians for therapeutic purposes.



Portion of Caryatids in Ginina Mogila Tomb.



Demyr Baba Temple cone-shaped and dome-shaped roofs.



Bas-relief designs in stone at Sbornyanovo.

## 20TH ANNIVERSARY WORLD CONFERENCE - AUGUST 1993

Registration is now open for our gala 20th Anniversary celebration at the Imperial Palace Hotel in Las Vegas, Nevada, USA August 1 to 5, 1993. A total of 19 speakers are confirmed for the Conference, including Erich von Daniken, world famous best-selling author of Chariots of the Gods? and 15 other books in the ancient astronaut field. Mr. von Daniken will present an all new, two hour slide lecture, plus an audience participation question and answer session at the end of his lecture.

Other speakers include Gene M. Phillips, Zecharia Sitchin, Brad Steiger, Sherry Hansen Steiger, Andrew Tomas, Stuart W. Greenwood, George T. Sassoon, Pasqual S. Schievella, Vincent DiPietro, Walter Hain, Gerardo Levet, Peter Krassa, Johannes Fiebag, David Fasold, Donald W. Patten, Samuel R. Windsor, and two new speakers, Walter J. Langbein and Alfred D. Bielek. Mr. Langbein is a German journalist, author and biblical scholar who will present a lecture on The Spaceships of Ezekiel, made famous by NASA Engineer Josef F. Blumrich, who has withdrawn as a speaker for personal reasons.

Mr. Bielek is a retired electronics engineer who claims to have been on board the USS ELDRIDGE, the Navy vessel which was the "target" for the highly secret "invisibility field" test in the Philadelphia harbor in 1943, which resulted in a disastrous effect on the crew, both mentally and physically, from the combined effects of the "time warp" (hyperspace effect) and the extremely powerful electromagnetic fields. Mr. Bielek's story of "The Philadelphia Experiment" is both gripping and bizarre.

Ulrich Dopatka of Switzerland will serve as Master of Ceremonies.

The total price for the Conference is US\$150 per person, which includes admission to all lectures (5 sessions), admission to the Hotel's show Legends in Concert, admission to the Gala Buffet Banquet and admission to the Hotel's Antique and Classic Auto Collection. Special Hotel room rates are being offered by the Imperial Palace Hotel of US\$45 per night, single or double, plus tax. American Airlines is the Official Airline for the Conference and persons in the U.S. and Canada who fly to and from the Conference on American are eligible for special discounted air fares.

For a Registration Form and all details, write to the Society Headquarters now. Membership in the Society is not required to attend the Conference.

## MEMBER EXPEDITION TO GUATEMALA AND HONDURAS - 1993

Reservations are being accepted for the Society's Member Expedition to Guatemala and Honduras scheduled for May 6 to 19, 1993. Two weeks of action-packed adventure will feature Tikal, Copan and Quirigua and many, many other sites. The price of US\$1,964 per person, double occupancy, includes all hotels (13 nights), all ground transportation, one-half of the meals, admissions to all sites, air fare from Guatemala City to Flores and return and air fare from Guatemala City to Roatan Island in the Caribbean and return to San Pedro Sula, Honduras. Single occupancy is US\$396 extra. The current international air fare via American Airlines from Chicago and return is US\$619 per person. Members may join the expedition in Chicago, Miami or Guatemala City. Write to the Society Headquarters for a complete itinerary and all details.

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# THE EMERALD TABLET OF HERMES-THOTH

BY ANDREW TOMAS\*

While the cities of Western Europe, such as Paris and London, were befogged by ignorance in the Dark Ages, Cordova, Granada and the Alhambra of Moorish Spain became the centers of high culture with schools, colleges and even astronomical observatories. Unlike Christians, the Arabs absorbed the civilization of countries occupied by them. In this manner they translated Greek writings, especially of the philosophers and scientists, and adopted them to their advantage.

A strange treatise appeared in Europe in the Middle Ages in a Latin Edition under the name of Tabula Smaragdina Hermetis, or the Emerald Tablet of Hermes. It was apparently received from Moorish Spain because texts of that kind were not written in Europe in that period of the obscuration of science and philosophy.

Among the scholars who described the Tablet was the famous "Doctor Universalis", titled thus for his proficiency in chemistry, physics and astronomy, and whose name was Albertus Magnus (1206-1280). In his voluminous writings he narrates that Alexander the Great found an emerald tablet with an inscription of Hermes in a cave in Phoenicia during his war on Persia in 331 B.C. Since emerald did not exist in such large slabs, Albertus Magnus concluded that the gem was made and cast artificially. A simpler explanation can be hazarded that it was made from green glass because goblets of such glass can be seen in the Cairo Museum.

Tabula Smaragdina in Phoenician, which the Moors probably had, begins with these lines: "The Secret Work of Hermes. It is true, without falsehood, and most real. That which is above is like that which is below. That which is below is like that which is above."

The modern decipherment of the Phoenician writing was not achieved until 1750 when English and French savants decoded the Phoenician alphabet, thanks to its affinity with the Hebrew. Because of this kinship the Arabs must have received the key to translation inasmuch as Phoenician, Arabic and Hebrew were all Semitic languages.

A rare collection of manuscripts from the pen of Dr. Sigismund Bacstrom, written about the end of the 18th Century, includes a Phoenician transcript of this tablet which hints at a practice of copying it through the centuries. The manuscripts are allegedly in England as the British historian Arthur Waite worked on them in the early 1920s.

Regarding the origin of the Hermetic Tablet the Russian historian Morozov in his book In Search of the Philosopher's Stone (Moscow, 1909), dated it to the Middle Ages and described it as "a philosophical poem". However, the document was drawn up in a style foreign to medieval treatises and was hardly Christian, which would have aroused the suspicion of the Inquisitor if a contemporary author was a European Catholic.

Scrutiny of handwritten literature before the 11th Century has not uncovered any works resembling the Emerald Tablet. For that reason it is only natural to believe that the text was produced in the Middle Ages unless one had seen the Phoenician text.

Since that time the Emerald Tablet of Hermes has

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become monopolized by alchemists and occultists and was shunned by scholars because of that. What has posed a dilemma for serious researchers has been the apparent absence of a connection between the Phoenician version of the Tabula Hermetis and the Land of the Nile where Hermes-Thoth came in a remote age.

Even such a competent American writer as Manly P. Hall, whose expertise in ancient lore was above reproach, had never pointed to a possible extant older Egyptian rendition.

Legend has it that Thoth-Hermes, the Lord of Books, left a large number of writings to the astronomer-priests of ancient Egypt. However, Clement of Alexandria (A.D.150-215) and Iamblichus (d.A.D.330) state in their surviving works that only forty-two Hermetic volumes remained in their times. The Papyrus Ebers is considered to be a portion of the six works of Hermes on medicine. The other thirty-six works, which deal with astronomy, geography and history, have disappeared.

While most Hermetic books were irretrievably lost in the course of centuries, their former existence can be surmised from inscriptions on temple walls and quotations from them by classical writers. The question at issue is - if Hermes-Thoth wrote this Tablet in Egypt, where is it? Actually, Manly Hall refers to an ancient author who lived several centuries before our era who had seen the Emerald Tablet in Egypt when it was some 2,000 years old. Unfortunately the name of the author is unknown.

Jean Champollion, who deciphered the hieroglyphics of ancient Egypt in 1921 (the Rosetta Stone), had a high opinion of the Books of Hermes-Thoth which, he claimed, were corroborated by the authentic records and monuments of Egypt.

After a long investigation I made a discovery that seven years after Champollion made his historic discovery whereby the Egyptian inscriptions could be read and understood, he conducted a scientific expedition to Egypt in company with Rosellini which was a great success and made him the father of Egyptology. During this expedition one of its members unearthed from a tomb in Thebes a collection of papyri. Among them was found a papyrus in Greek which was written during the reign of the Ptolemies whose kings ruled Egypt after Alexander the Great and made Greek the official language. These so-called "alchemical manuscripts" were acquired by the State Museum of the Netherlands at Leiden in the year of their discovery - 1828, and they are still there as part of the greater Leiden Papyrus. I have a letter to that effect from the Curator of the Egyptian Section of that Museum.

According to the Encyclopaedia Britannica these papyri were written in the 3rd Century A.D. though their matter is much older. Kurt Seligmann in his History of Magic (N.Y., 1948) makes a momentous statement: "The earliest recorded copy of the Emerald Tablet can be found in the Leiden Papyrus discovered in Egypt in 1828."

The significance of this finding can hardly be overestimated. No longer can we doubt that the Tabula Smaragdina Hermetis originated in Egypt and is a part of a literary legacy left by Hermes. It ceases to be an object on the edge of history because it is now validated by a 3rd Century papyrus kept at Leiden.

Herodotus, 5th Century B.C. Greek historian, writes in his Histories that Thoth-Hermes came to Earth from the stars in 17,570 B.C. - a staggering remote date about which the Greek writer was quite certain. According to Sanchuniathon, an ancient Phoenician sage, Hermes constructed a skyship for Cronus, presumably of the type in which he had flown in interstellar space. Thousands of years later the god said to the Egyptian priests: "I have to return now to the celestial country whence I came."

These fragmentary chronicles of antiquity clearly define the god Thoth as a cosmic civilizer who contributed to the founding of ancient Egypt in an

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epoch that our historians do not recognize.

What is important is the fact that the "alchemical writings", found at Thebes near Karnak in 1828, embodied the original Egyptian rendition of the Emerald Tablet of Hermes. Professor Marcellin P.E. Berthelot (1827-1907) in his book *Archéologie et Historie des Sciences* has a French translation of this document.

In 1967 I had a long discussion in Moscow with Dr. Nicholas Zhiron, Professor of Chemistry, on the topic of the Emerald Tablet. He considered the philosophical postulates of this ancient text scientific in nature even though archaic in formulation. The Professor was greatly impressed by the first proposition of the Tablet regarding the similarity between the infinitely great and the infinitely small because this is also the view of modern science.

The notion that "all things have been derived from the One" seemed to him a declaration of the unity of the Cosmos and of its uniform atomic structure. The lines saying that "the sun is its father, the moon is its mother" were understood by Dr. Zhiron as a symbolic expression of the positive and negative polarity of all matter.

The Professor was particularly affected by the instruction in the Tablet "to separate the earth from the fire, the gross from the subtle, gently with much care" because he thought that this could be a description of the splitting of the atom. Also we spoke about Democritus, the originator of the atomic theory, who spent seven years in the Land of the Pharaohs, learning from the temple scholars. He went back to Greece where he, like a modern physicist, wrote: "In reality there is nothing but atoms and space." A question arises - did he study the Tablet of Hermes when he lived in Egypt?

An indication of the location of the legendary Tablet may perhaps be perceived in the old tradition that Hermes had hidden his books in a crypt in Egypt which is extremely difficult to find. This belief is upheld by the expression of "hermetically sealed", signifying containers that are hard to open. It might allude to the concealed vault of Hermes with its treasures. Will it be opened in the next Century?

## BABYLONIAN VENUS OBSERVATIONS

BY DR. STUART W. GREENWOOD\*

I have already examined the possibility that periods of visibility and invisibility of Venus as observed from Earth and recorded by the ancient Maya indicate that Venus once possessed an atmosphere that contained only partial cloud cover. This is in contrast to conditions today in which the surface of Venus is hidden from visual observation from Earth by an atmospheric cloud blanket. In the Dresden Codex, for example, Venus is invisible against the glare of the Sun for 90 days when passing behind the Sun (around Superior Conjunction), whereas today this period is around 50 days. The shorter period of invisibility today may be attributed to the higher reflective properties of an atmosphere with complete cloud cover (1). The different lengths of the periods of visibility as Morning Star and Evening Star respectively as recorded in the Dresden Codex may also be explained by the hypothesis that the planet once possessed only partial cloud cover (2).

In connection with a discussion of the Mayan Dresden Codex, Aveni observes that it is curious that the Babylonians also counted a three month disappearance interval when the planet was behind the Sun (i.e. around Superior Conjunction) (3). Aveni references Pannekoek (4).

Whereas the data in the Mayan codices are relatively simple to deal with as they give periods of visibility and invisibility in specific numbers

that add up to the average synodic period for Venus of 584 days, the ancient Babylonian records on clay tablets present the interpreter with many puzzles.

Pannekoek describes one Babylonian astronomical document that has been deciphered to give the following results: The interval of visibility as the Morning Star is 8 months and 5 days, followed by 3 months of invisibility. There is then another period of 8 months and 5 days as the Evening Star, and finally a period of 7 days invisibility to complete the synodic period.

If we assume equal months of 30 days duration, the synodic period would be 587 days in length. This is the upper end of the range of variation in the synodic period of Venus (5). Moreover, taking the period of each month as 30 days, we get the following intervals:

|                                      |          |
|--------------------------------------|----------|
| Visibility as Morning Star           | 245 days |
| Invisibility at Superior Conjunction | 90 days  |
| Visibility as Evening Star           | 245 days |
| Invisibility at Inferior Conjunction | 7 days   |

We thus have an indication from the Babylonians that the period of invisibility of Venus when passing behind the Sun was around 90 days at one time, and in this respect the Mayan Dresden Codex and the Babylonian records appear to support one another. On the other hand the periods of visibility as Morning Star and Evening Star respectively differ in the Mayan records, but are shown in the above interpretation of the Babylonian records to be equal (at least in terms of months and days).

Lynn E. Rose and Raymond C. Vaughan, in a breakdown of the material used to develop the Babylonian data, are quoted by Douglas (6) as showing that some of the material indicates that eastern (Morning Star) visibilities averaged 240.2 days and that western (Evening Star) visibilities averaged 249 and 4/9 days.

Here there is closer resemblance to the Mayan data in that the periods of visibility as Evening Star are greater than those as Morning Star.

Clearly, the Babylonian data and its interpretations invite further examination of the possibility that (perhaps in conjunction with the Mayan records) there is something to be learned here that will contribute to our understanding of the comparatively recent history of the planet Venus.

The author is grateful to Dr. Lynn Rose for furnishing data and interpretations on Babylonian astronomical data, and for reviewing this note. The latter, of course, is entirely the responsibility of the author.

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